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PSYCHOLOGY IN A JUVENILE COURT

This was a typical case of the delinquent mob; that is, of improvised crime decided by ignorance and superstition which did not allow the crowd to understand the reason for the order of the Prefect, which was based upon the foundations of hygiene and legitimate care for the public health. It seems to the author that this was a case where this ignorance and this superstition ought to have excused in part, at least, the attitude of the mob. The mob was not composed of bad men at heart. They were deluded people. Instead of being sentenced to jail they ought to have been given an education which would have convinced and persuaded them of their mistake. They were not even violent people, because even if they did descend to the throwing of stones, they did not reach the point of going to excess—a point which they could very easily have reached considering their number and the excitement of the moment; everything ended in a short time and no harm was done except some slight bruises. The Appellate court, instead of treating the delinquents scientifically, took the position that the fact that the individuals were acting as members of a crowd made their crime the more grave, and in coming to this opinion they misinterpreted the doctrines of the Positive school and indeed, stood upon these doctrines to uphold their own opinion. All the old arguments were brought up again—the old arguments that have been overturned, over and over again, and that had, the author had supposed, been finally crushed out of existence by the series of decisions contrary to this decision.

Sighele believes that the light sentence which would have been the result of taking into account the ignorance and the prejudice of the mob would not have favored the individuals illegitimately and would not thus have incited other people to crime of the same kind, but would rather have been much more beneficial than the severe sentence. Prejudice and ignorance are not conquered, but rather are they made more sharp and bitter by years or months in prison. The judges should have taken into consideration, in judging the indicted people who were almost all very young, that not a little portion of responsibility falls upon society, which leaves the multitudes in a deplorable intellectual state.

R. F.

Psychology in a Juvenile Court.—"Believing that if the state is to be intelligent in its treatment of boys and girls who are going wrong it must procure accurate analyses of the social, mental, and physical factors contributing to each child's waywardness, the Juvenile court of Seattle, Washington, has added to itself a department of research. What was accomplished during its first six months is told by Dr. Lilburn Merrill, director of the department. It is interesting to note by way of preface that A. W. Frater, judge of the court, regards the department as one of his most valuable and practical aids in administering delinquency cases. He writes:

"It is our purpose (in the new department), so far as possible, to have every delinquent child, who may be brought into court, first placed under observation in this department. When possible or convenient, the examination is made in the presence of his parent or guardian. Here he is studied sympathetically from the viewpoint of the physician and psychologist who have specialized in the care of this class of children, and a written report of the social, physical and mental factors which may have contributed to the child's delinquency is presented to us when the case comes on for hearing. This report

PROPOSED LAW GOVERNING DOMESTIC RELATIONS

is available to the parents, who will thus be apprised of any existing physical or mental defects. Corrective treatment is provided, so far as possible, for every case.'

"Director Merrill has been closely allied with juvenile courts and child-welfare work for ten years. In his report he states two objects with which the department will be concerned during the coming year:

"First, a survey of community conditions contributory to the development of juvenile delinquency, so that we may minimize such social factors.

"Second, a preliminary consultation with every child who is brought into court, and an intensive individual study of those who are actual or potential recidivists. This we shall attempt to do, so far as we may, by a study of the child's

1. Family history,
2. Developmental history,
3. Physical condition,
4. Mental condition.

"For the purpose of this research the consultation room provided for the department has been supplied with suitable instruments of precision for making neurological tests and measuring vision and audition. Fortunately, much of the material we are using is inexpensive, and the cost of the entire equipment need not exceed one hundred dollars. * * * Aside from the use of these few instruments, the study of the children is made by ordinary diagnostic methods.

"The most encouraging feature is the uniform appreciation expressed by the parents of 200 children who have already passed through our hands. An anxious father or mother is not slow in appreciating that we are making a sincere attempt to assist in the diagnosis and treatment of his child who is going wrong. And in several cases we have been gratified in obtaining satisfactory results which could not have been had but for the assistance which this department provides."—From *The Survey*, Vol. XXVIII, No. 14, July 6, 1912.

COURTS—LAWS.

Proposed Law Governing Domestic Relations.—The review of Judge Goodnow's annual report by Mr. William H. Baldwin, published in our last issue, pages 400 ff. makes it pertinent to recall the following draft of a law relating to domestic cases, which was proposed by Mr. Baldwin at the National Conference of Charities and Corrections at Boston, in June, 1911, relating to desertion or non-support of wife or children, and providing punishment therefor; and to promote uniformity between the states in reference thereto.

SECTION 1. Be it enacted by, etc.: That any husband who shall, without just cause, desert or wilfully neglect or refuse to provide for the support and maintenance of his wife in destitute or necessitous circumstances; or any parent who shall, without lawful excuse, desert or wilfully neglect or refuse to provide for the support and maintenance of his or her (legitimate or illegitimate) child or children under the age of sixteen years in destitute or necessitous circumstances, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, on conviction thereof, shall be punished by a fine of not exceeding five hundred dollars, or by imprisonment in the (1) with hard labor for not